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Friday, October 1, 2004

TODAY'S ENQUIRER

- Front Page
- Local News
- Sports
- Business
- Editorials
- Tempo
- Home Style
- Travel
- Health
- Technology
- Weather
- Back Issues
- Search
- Subscribe

SPORTS

- Bearcats
- Bengals
- High School
- Reds
- Xavier

VIEWPOINTS

- Jim Borgman
- Columnists
- Readers' views

ENTERTAINMENT

- Movies
- Dining
- Horoscopes
- Lottery Results
- Local Events
- Video Games

CINCINNATI.COM

- Giveaways
- Maps/Directions
- Send an E-Postcard
- Coupons
- Visitor's Guide

CLASSIFIEDS

- Jobs
- Cars
- Homes
- Obituaries
- General
- Place an ad

HELP

- Feedback
- Subscribe
- Search

Newsroom Directory

Owens endorsed by FOP in county coroner's race

By Cindi Andrews
Enquirer staff writer

The Cincinnati police union threw the weight of its 1,000-plus members Thursday behind Democratic coroner candidate O'dell Owens.

"He's going to be fair, and that's what we want: fairness and objectivity," Fraternal Order of Police Vice President Keith Fangman said.

Owens, an African-American doctor, called the FOP's endorsement a step toward improving relations between police and minorities.

"There has been a rift between the black community and the FOP, and there shouldn't be," he said. "We care as much about reducing crime as anybody else."

Owens is running against incumbent Republican Carl Parrott, whose office has been at the center of several controversies since his 2000 re-election. The county is being sued for millions of dollars over the biggest scandal, in which artist Thomas Condon took photos of posed bodies in the morgue.

Condon said Parrott and other morgue officials knew he intended to photograph bodies as part of an art project. Parrott has said he knew nothing about it.

The union also objected to the coroner's handling of the deaths of Roger Owensby and Nathaniel Jones during separate scuffles with police. Parrott's office termed both cases homicides.

"I understand that doesn't sit very well with them," Parrott said Thursday.

Among other FOP endorsements:

- Democrat Eve Bolton for county commissioner. She is running against Pat DeWine, who angered the FOP as a Cincinnati councilman when he supported the outside hiring of top police officials.

- Republican David Grossmann for commissioner. He was endorsed over Democratic incumbent Todd Portune because of

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- Ohio Woman Says Kids Requested Cages
- Retailers Post Mixed Sales Results in Feb.
- New, More Colorful \$10 Bill to Debut
- McCartneys Join Effort to End Seal Hunt
- Seminoles Beat No. 1 Duke in Wild Finish

Grossmann's experience as a juvenile court judge, Fangman said.

- Ohio Treasurer Joe Deters for prosecutor. Deters is running against Fanon Rucker, Melissa Powers and James Rueger in an all-write-in race to replace Mike Allen. Rucker has never prosecuted a felony, Fangman noted.

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PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES

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- Editorial: Listen to what they said, not how they said it

- Your voices on debate

TOP STORIES

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THEATER REVIEW

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SPECIAL REPORT: TEST STRESS

Schools grapple with test stress

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Did you know?

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IN THE TRISTATE

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Angels graduate as police sweep

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Owens endorsed by FOP in county coroner's race

Butler fugitive nabbed overseas

Proposed cuts languish

Finneytown looks at teacher layoffs

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Court: Reveal donors' names

Opera losing influential artistic director

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Local news briefs

ENQUIRER COLUMNISTS

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LIVES REMEMBERED

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Students touch piece of history

N. Ky. news briefs

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